

# 300 UCP staffers rally to protest cuts in funding

Nearly 300 employees of United Cerebral Palsy, a private agency that cares for hundreds of mentally retarded patients in New York City, rallied outside the World Trade Center yesterday to demand more state funding.

UCP executive director Robert Schonhorn, addressing his employees through a bullhorn, said that the agency is nearly bankrupt. UCP will be forced to shut down all of its residential and educational programs on June 15 unless the state provides more money, Schonhorn said. The agency is responsible for 700 mentally retarded patients.

The demonstrators chanted "Hell no, we won't go" and "Fight." Picket signs said, "No More Snakepit" and "UCP's love for the kids is 100-percent natural."

Schonhorn said Gov. Mario M. Cuomo and state budget officials had refused to award UCP a contract that reflected agency costs. "I can't believe that someone so dedicated to humanity as our governor has been doesn't care," he said.

State budget officials want to continue negotiating with Schonhorn, according to Richard Starkey, a spokesman for Cuomo. But Starkey added: "They're not terribly optimistic that they can meet his demands. There isn't enough money to satisfy him."

United Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State has a Medicaid-funded contract to run 60 apartments and three institutions for the mentally retarded. The institutions include the 310-bed Karl D. Warner Center in

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